(ii) Inhibition of sprouting in tubers, bulbs and rhizomes.

(iii) Delay in ripening and ageing in fruits and vegetables.

(iv) Destruction of microbes responsible for food spoilage.

(v) Elimination of parasites and pathogens of public health importance in food.

Threat of National Security due to mining of mineral sands

1438. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any project is pending with Govemment to obtain permission for mining of mineral sands from the coastal areas of Kollam or from Alappuzha districts of Kerala State by any private or joint venture firms;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government see any threat on the national security to allow mining of minerals sands containing rare earths by private companies; and

(d) if so, Government reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Three applications received from the Government of Kerala for grant of mineral concessions for mineral sand in respect of M/s Kerala Rare Earths and Minerals Limited for three areas in villages Purakkad and Thrikunnapuzha, in Allapuzha district are pending with the Central Govemment.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Storage of radioactive wastes

1439. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that management and disposal of long-life radioactive wastes has been a technical and political problem world-over;